

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

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AMEMBASSY LIMA

CONFIDENTIAL QUITO 3077

LIMA FOR DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY MCNEIL

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: SNAR, EC
SUBJECT: PRESIDENT POVEDA TALKS ABOUT NARCOTICS PROGRAM

1. IN A MEETING WITH DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY FRANCIS MCNEIL IN SALINAS ON MAY 6, ADMIRAL ALFREDO POVEDA BURBANO, PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENT, SPOKE AT THE OUTSET OF THE CONVERSATION ABOUT ECUADOR'S NEW NARCOTICS CONTROL PROGRAM.

2. POVEDA SAID THAT A REFORM OF PENAL CODE WAS NOW IN PROCESS WHICH WOULD TIGHTEN JUDICIAL PROCEDURES IN DRUG CASES AND BE MUCH MORE PUNITIVE THAN BEFORE. THE SUPREME COURT HAD JUST REVIEWED THE PROPOSALS AND SENT BACK ITS ASSESSMENT. POVEDA REMARKED THAT THE SECOND PRONG OF THE PROGRAM DEALT WITH BETTER POLICE ACTION AND HE DESCRIBED THIS AS THE MOST DIFFICULT. HE SAID THAT GOE WAS STILL LOOKING FOR A PROPER MIX OF INCENTIVES SO THAT THE POLICE WOULD PERFORM THEIR TASKS HONESTLY AND EFFICIENTLY. THE THIRD PRONG, HE SAID, WAS INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AND HE POINTED TO THE CURRENT ATTORNEYS GENERAL CONFERENCE IN CARACAS AS PART OF THIS EFFORT.

3. CHARGE CORR NOTED THAT SINCE HIS LAST CONVERSATION
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WITH POVEDA ON DRUGS, THE GOE HAD ARRESTED THREE OF THE EIGHTEEN KNOWN LARGE TRAFFICKERS. MR. MCNEIL OBSERVED THAT THE NARCOTICS PROBLEM WAS A TWO-FACED COIN AND HAD TO BE TACKLED BOTH ON THE SUPPLY SIDE AS WELL AS ON THE DEMAND SIDE IN THE US.

4. POVEDA REGRETTED THAT ECUADOR HAD BEEN SLOW TO TACKLE

THE NARCOTICS PROBLEM. IF GOE HAD TAKEN ACTION A FEW YEARS AGO, PROBLEM WOULD BE MUCH EASIER TO SOLVE NOW. HOWEVER, HE REITERATED THE SERIOUSNESS WHICH THE GOE WAS FACING THE ISSUE NOW. HE THOUGHT THAT IT WAS STILL NOT TOO LATE SINCE WHILE CORRUPTION WAS FAIRLY PREVALENT AT THE LOWER LEVELS, IT HAD NOT REACHED THE UPPOER STRATA OF GOVERNMENT. FINALLY, HE DECLARED HIMSELF SATISFIED WITH THE PROGRESS THAT HAS BEEN MADE SO FAR.

CORR

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